Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat
Incorporated.

AUGUST 1991

# EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

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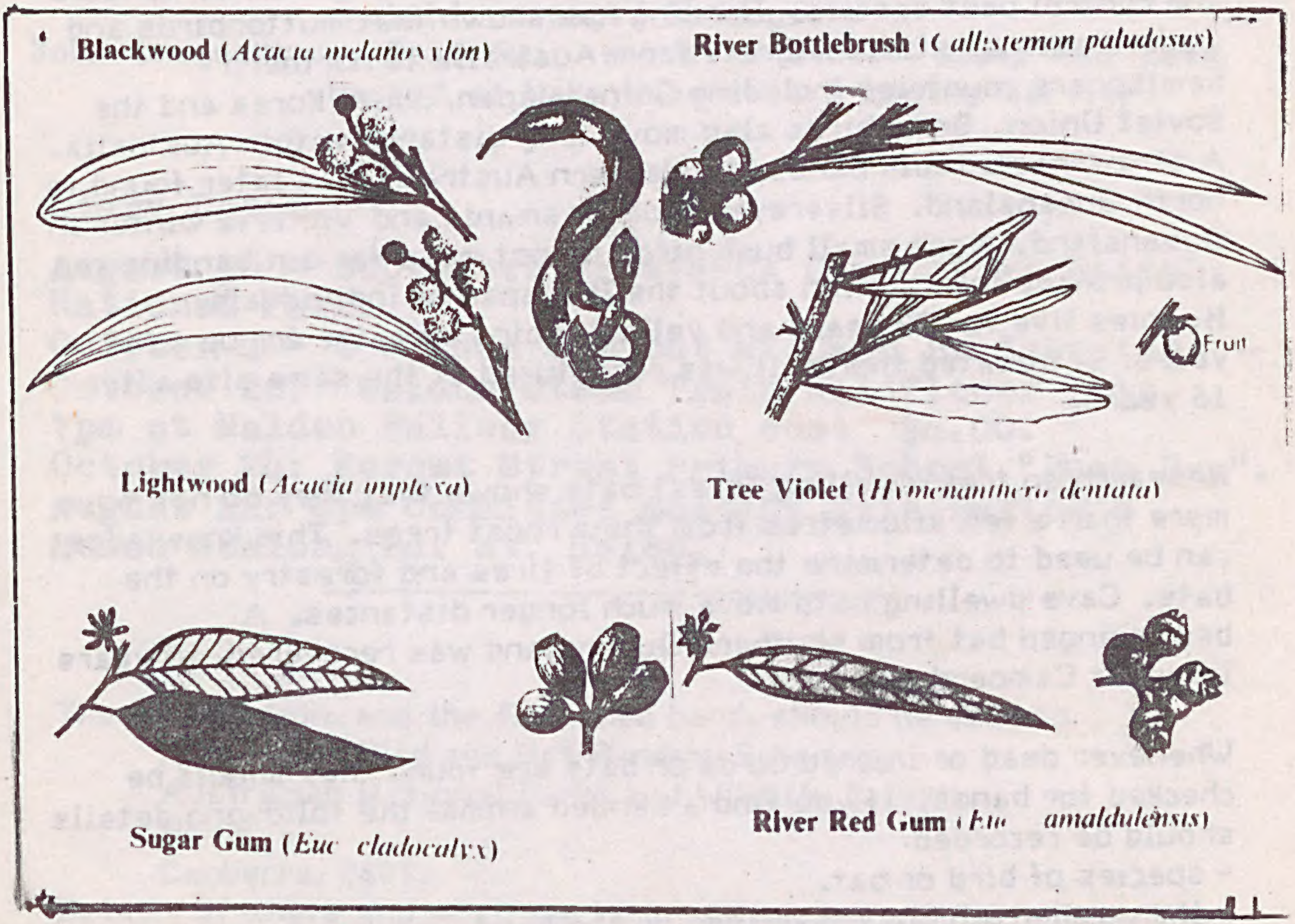
| Meeting | August 2 | Mr D.Frood - Vegetation of the Western Plains |
| Meeting | September 6 | Mr G.Cheers - Mosses and Lichens |
| Excursion | August 4 | Moolort Plains - A.Teese |
| Excursion | August 30 - Sept. 1 | WVFNCA Campout at Kulkyne Nat. Park Hattah |
| | September 8 | Dollies Creek Forest - L.Fink |


Blackwood (Acacia melanoxylon)
River Bottlebrush (Callistemon paludosus)
Fruit
Lightwood (Acacia implexa)
Tree Violet (Hymenanthera dentata)
Sugar Gum (Euc cladocalyx)
River Red Gum (Euc camaldulensis)

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| President: | Mr K Hammond | Ph.053 394534 |
| Vice Pres: | Mr K McDonnell | 326800 |
| Secretary: | Mr J Gregurke | 394993 |
| Treasurer: | Mrs F Williamson | 327631 |
| Editor: | Mr L Fink | 052 861319 |

**Meetings as specified are held at the School of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street Sth., Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m. EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND ARMSTRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for HALF DAY***

## Bird and Bat Banding Scheme

I recently found a dead swan at Winter Swamp which had a band on one leg. I sent the details to Canberra and received a reply which included the information that the bird was a juvenile when banded at Lake Wendouree 5 months earlier, and a pamphlet on bird and bat banding.

Each year, 80 000 birds are banded in Australia. About 10% of the bands are recovered. Bats are also banded by placing the band around the fore-arm. Banders are carefully trained so that animals are captured and banded without harm. The banded animals can carry out their normal activities without discomfort.

The scheme aims to find out about the habits and movement of birds and bats. This information is necessary to conserve native species and control pest species. Banding has shown that muttonbirds and waders such as stints migrate from Australia to northern hemisphere countries including China, Japan, South Korea and the Soviet Union. Some birds also move long distance within Australia. A straw-necked ibis banded in Western Australia was later found in north Queensland. Silvereyes from Tasmania and Victoria winter in Queensland. Most small bush birds do not move far but banding can also provide information about the life span of individuals. Magpies live for 20 years and yellow robins may live for up to 12 years. A striated thornbill was recaptured at the same site after 16 years.

Research on tree-dwelling forest bats shows that they do not move more than a few kilometres from their roost trees. This knowledge can be used to determine the effect of fires and forestry on the bats. Cave dwelling bats move much longer distances. A bent-winged bat from southern Queensland was recovered, 10 years later, at Camperdown.

Whenever dead or injured birds or bats are found they should be checked for bands. If you find a banded animal the following details should be recorded:
- species of bird or bat.
- the number or colour markings on the band.
- the date and place where found.
- your assessment of possible cause of death.
- your name and address.

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## Field Reports: July Meeting

Lyndsay Fink - Masked Lapwing seen performing broken wing trick at Meredith, near nest with 2 eggs.
- More Eastern Rosellas than previous years around Meredith.
- Brush-tailed Phascogale seen at Enfield.

Ken McDonnell - Three adult and one juvenile Pied Currawong are staying at Invermay this year. They usually leave in March but have remained and are competing with the Grey Currawongs.

Ken Hammond - Three White-plumed Honeyeaters in Wendouree.

Margaret Rotheram - Dead Pelican found at Lake Wendouree probably savaged by dogs.

John Gregurke - Dead Swan found at Winter Swamp had been banded at Lake Wendouree 5 months earlier.

## Diary Dates.

August 30 - September 1: WVFNCA Campout at Hattah National Park.
October 4 - 6 WVFNCA Campout at Cape Bridgewater.
October 20: Maldon Steam Train Wildflower Trip 1pm at Maldon Railway Station cost $4.00.
October 24: Forest Street Primary School "Bush Day".
August 22: 8pm Committee meeting Avis Barlow's House Geelong Rd. Mt. Helen.

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The information, and the flattened band, should be sent to:

Australian Bird and Bat Banding Schemes,
Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service,
Box 8,
Canberra, 2601.

Details of where and when the bird was banded will be returned to you.

Information above is from "The Australian Bird and Bat Banding Schemes" pamphlet produced by Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. JG

## Coral Fungi on the Invermay "Reef" - July Excurs.

Considering that it was a winter's day excursion a healthy group of members came to Invermay to Gunn's Flat. The weather was fine and mainly over cast and the going was not too sticky.

The fauna was very limited with a very small number of birds, the occasional Yellow Robin, Superb Blue Wren, and White Browed Scrub Wren.

The Flora of interest was essentially confined to the Fungi, of which we saw at least twenty species.

We couldn't complain about any lack of colour, colours ranged from the white of the Tremella species (Jelly Fungus) nearly through the colours of the Rainbow.

The Rainbow Fungus (Traetes versicolour) itself. a wood destroying Bracket Fungi, does not nearly live up to it's name.

For Red, we had the Cortinariua aff. sanguinensis - as it's latin name suggests, a small dank blood red species which smells of radish but apparantly nobody has been brave enough (or perhaps lived)long enough to record the taste.

Cortinarius aff cinnab arinus, a "brilliant and spectacular fungus" with a bulbous cap, the colour of cinnibar or red lead. It both smells and tastes of radish.

Russula persanguinea - bright red flat cap and white gills - a very fragile fungus.

Orange Marasmius sp - Collybia elegans - orange red caps with the upper part of the stem white and the lower part orange red. Usually found on the forest floor growing in moss.

Galerina hypnorum - a delicate little honey coloured fungus that is always found among moss.

Yellow Cortinarius ochraceus - a rich bright yellowccoloured species with glutinous caps and stems.

Mycena epipterygia - cap greenish to brownish yellow (about 2cm) with a slender 6cm yellow stem "smells like cucumber especially when picked or bruised". Taste(like many of the species we saw) -"not "not recorded".

Green Cortinarius austrovenetus - dank green caps with yellow gills. Not surprisingly, the taste has never been recorded.

Blue Cortinarius rotundisporus - a "small elegant" fungus with a steel blue cap.

Mycena interrupta - Bruce Fuhrer describes this fungus"as our most distinctive and beautiful Mycena with small unique bright blue caps withdark central discs and white gills".

And as the T.V. advertisments for recorded music say "and much, much more"

The brilliant splash of yellow of Fuligo septica a slime mould, in the early stages of its growth cycle.

Rhizopogon luteolus - puff balls puffed by young and old!

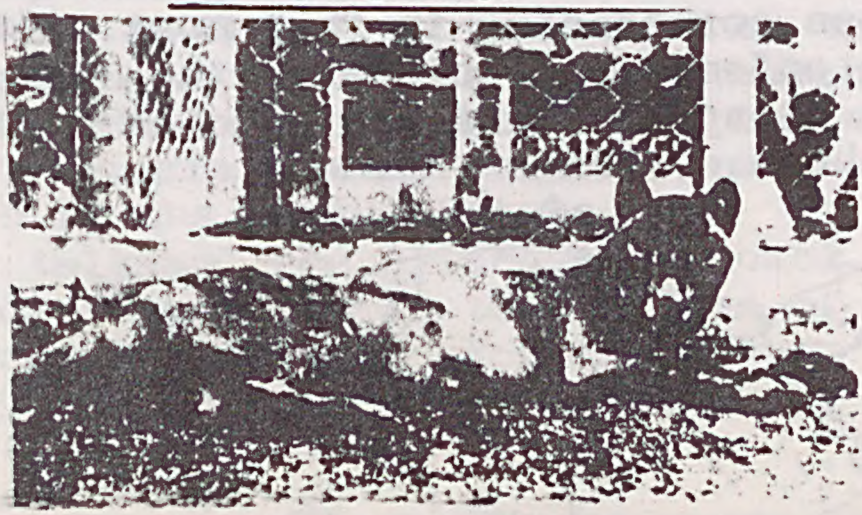
The highlights, certainly for me and therefore explaining the title of thereport - the Ramaria species - holorubella, fumigata etc. - pink, yellow white coral fungi with the pink specimen quite memorable.

All in all then, a very rewarding two hours for young and old. The only person I can think of who was not present and woudn't have perhaps enjoyed it was the Bush Tucker Man - I don't thinkhe would have found much to his taste, There again, nobody seems to have tried all the corral fungi!

Acknowledgements-

Ken McDonnell, who suggested the walk from Gunn's Flat, Accompanied me on a Reconaissance and provided me with a list of the fungi that we saw.

"A Field Companion to Australian Fungi" B. Fuhrer 1985 Five Mile Press, Hawthorn.
"Common Australian Fungi" A.M. Young 1982. N.S.W. Uni. Press, Sydney.



## The Galapagos Islands

Mrs V. Dedman

Our Guest speaker at the July was mrs Valda Dedman who is a member of Geelong Field Naturalist Club. Valda spok about fher recent trip to Equador and the Galapagos Islands.

The Galapagos were born from the sea by volcanic activity, they are many millions of years old and have a unique flora and fauna, it is the fauna that is most interesting and startling.

Many millenia passed after the birth of these volcanic islands before they were cool enough for the seeds of hardy species adapted to the harsh rocky soil. Often they would start only to be lost in more violen eruptions.

Eventually more highly organised plants came and after them came insects, lizards and birds. The chance of any sort of animal surviving the six hundred mile trip from the South American continent were slight, only a few hardy species were able to suvive, hence the gaps in the animal and plant life of the islands

There is not a single frog or salamander on these islands although they abound on the S. A. continent. Land animals are represented solely by one kind of rat and of bat. There is one genus of snake (land snake) and five genera of four footed reptiles. Even among the birds there are many gaps.

Those birds that reached these islands developed over the course of ages, into a number of special forms found nowhere else in the World.

Only on these Islands is found seaweed eating marine lizards or iguanas; cactus eating land igua iguanas. Nowhere else can we see giant tortoises or flightless cormorants, in fact most of the species are endemic and unique to the Galapagos.

There are 89 species and sub species of birds that nest there, 77 exist nowhere else.

The animals found conditions so differen to those of their original home that they had to adapt to to new conditions. So in these islands a tremendous experiment in the history of evolution was enacted.

There are thirteen species of finches each species differs from the others, especially in the shape of the beaks some have pointed bills and live on insects, others with short conical bills feed on seeds, one is remarkable for his large hard nut-cracker bill and eats very hard seeds.

When Darwin visited these islands he realized this fact. He recognised that they had all been derived from a common ancestor.

A further curiosity of the islands is the co-existance of animals belonging to both the antarctic and tropical zones. It is astonishing to find fur seals and penguins side by side with tropical marine iguanas.

They all have a remarkable tameness even in the presence of manaand they hardly bother to get out of the way.

These Islands are cooled by the Humboldt Current which comes up from the Antarctic areas and flows around the islands.

As no terrestial animals managed to get a foot hold on these island until recent times, the Galapagos were isles without fear and a retreat for shy animals that became absolutely fearless.

The Archipeligo is a veritable Garden of Eden, or rather it was until one day Man the most dangerous of all living creatures set foot on these strange shores.

This came about on February 23 1535, when Bishop tom'as de Berlanga set sail from Panama for Peru.

For a week he sailed southwards then the wind dropped eventually land was seen on March 10.

The Spaniards disapointment was great when they saw the stoney wasteland, yet the crew were saved from death by the cactus plants.

For her talk and the slides she showed us we thank Valda very much, as this is one of the most interesting places in our World.

L.F.

## BOTANICAL NOTES :-

### FAMILY LILIACEAE ( Lily Family )

A cosmopolitan family, widespread in temperate regions. The family name is derived from the genus Lilium, which has only one species native to Australia.

There have been alterations in some monocotyledon families in recent years. The situation is not yet resolved. The family, Amaryllidaceae ( Narcissus, onion, garlic ) has been combined with Liliaceae ( new Flora of Australia ). The Grass Trees ( Xanthorrhoea and Lomandra ( Matrushes ) may be included in a family Xanthorrhoeaceae or in Liliaceae.

In all the world there are about 300 genera in Liliaceae with over 4000 species, but few in Sth. America. There are 50 - 60 genera and almost 300 spp. in Australia. Many handsome garden plants e.g. lilies, tulips, hyacinths and agapanthus belong to this family. Although it can hardly be called " handsome " asparagus is another member.

The plants are perennial herbs with rhizomatous, bulbous, tuberous, or fibrous rootstocks. The flowers are axillary, terminal or in racemose inflorescences or umbels. Individual flowers are regular, bisexual or rarely, dioecious. The perianth is coloured with six segments, free or united at the base. There are usually six staments, inserted at the base of the perianth. The ovary is superior and 3-celled with numerous ovules in each cell. The fruit is a berry or capsule.

The following genera are found near Ballarat :-

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| Arthropodium | ( e.g. Vanilla Lily ) |
| Bulbine | ( e.g. Bulbine Lily ) |
| Burchardia | ( e.g. Milkmaids ) |
| Chamaescilla | ( e.g. Blue Stars ) |
| Dianella | ( e.g. Flax Lily ) |
| Dichopogon | ( Chocolate Lily ) |
| Thysanotus | ( Fringe Lily ) |
| Tricoryne | ( Yellow Rush-lily ) |
| Wurmbia, formerly Anguillaria, | ( Early Nancy ) |

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